

**FREE**

# School News

*Education + Communication = A Better Nation*



**Covering the Menifee Union School District**

**Volume 1, Issue 1**

**February 2021**



**Bell Mountain Middle School**



**Hans Christensen Middle School**



**Menifee Valley Middle School**



**Harvest Hill STEAM Academy**



**Chester W. Morrison Elementary School**



**Callie Kirkpatrick Elementary School**



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**Freedom Crest Elementary School**



**Herk Bouris Elementary School**



**Menifee Preschool**



**Oak Meadows Elementary School**



**Quail Valley Elementary School**



**Ridgemoor Elementary School**



**Southshore Elementary School**



**Táawila Elementary School**

# A Little About Us



**Dr. Jennifer Root**  
Superintendent

Welcome to the first *School News Roll Call* publication for Menifee Union School District! Over the past year, more than ever, we have recognized the importance of sharing information with our community. I hope that as you read this publication, you will see the dedication and passion of our schools for our students and learn more about the great things going on in the Menifee Union School District.

Nelson Mandela once said, “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” Each day, the teachers, support staff and administration of Menifee Union School District seek to provide the children of Menifee with an arsenal of knowledge and soft skills that will prepare them to successfully move on to high school and then on to a future pathway of college, career, military service or entrepreneurship and ultimately to be a positive change in the world around them.

Education has a long and rich history in the city of Menifee. The first school in Menifee was established in 1890 at Bradley Road. Menifee Union School District came to be in 1952 when Menifee and Antelope Schools unified and the new Menifee Elementary School was built to serve the children in Menifee. Just as the city has experienced rapid growth since obtaining cityhood in 2008, Menifee Union School District has also grown quickly, now serving approximately 10,500 children in the city of Menifee and surrounding areas. This growth is anticipated to continue; currently, the district is preparing to build middle school number four in the Audie Murphy Ranch area and elementary school number 15 in the southeast portion of the city.

It has been my pleasure to join the Menifee Union School District in October 2020, and I am humbled to serve as your superintendent. I have served in a variety of roles during my 28 years in public education, including elementary teacher, middle school teacher, elementary principal, director of student services overseeing special education, and assistant superintendent of Business Services. Since first entering the classroom, children and preparing them for their unlimited future is what has guided my passion in education. My core values of integrity, equity, accountability, ethical behavior and loyalty will guide my work in the district. I place high value on relationships and, once we are able, I look forward to meeting you on our campuses and in the community.

Menifee is expected to top 100,000 residents within the next year. In meeting with stakeholders that include staff, parents and community members, a common theme I heard was that Menifee is a small town. As I continued through these conversations, I realized that what people were trying to encapsulate was the small-town feel that is part of the character of the city of Menifee and Menifee Union School District. This small-town feel is something we will work hard to continue to foster through having strong communication, enabling schools to serve as hubs of the community, and through the development of relationships.

As a district, we are greatly appreciative of the efforts of our parents and the community in ensuring that our students continue to flourish in spite of the COVID-19-related school closure. In order to stay up to date with the great things going on throughout the district, please join us on Facebook (Menifee Union School District), Twitter (@MenifeeUSD) and Instagram (MenifeeUSD).

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## Our Storied Bell

The original Menifee Union School District school bell was placed into storage after the closing of Menifee Elementary School in 2008.

Menifee Valley Historical Association member Elinor Martin said that during the 1890s, the bell was hung in the steeple atop the school, where a flagpole graced the roof. In 1916 during a bad storm, the flagpole was struck by lightning and both the pole and bell came crashing down into the classroom below. Fortunately, there were no students in the building at the time, and from then on, the flagpole was placed in the ground out front.

The bell was hung at the original 1890s school location and then was moved to the Menifee Elementary School location in 1952, where it stayed until the closing of the school in 2008. It can now be seen at the Bob O'Donnell District Education Center.



## Governing Board



**Jackie Johansen**  
*President*  
(Area #4)



**J. Kyle Root**  
*Vice President*  
(Area #3)



**Morgan Singleton II**  
*Clerk*  
(Area #5)



**Xavier Padilla**  
*Deputy Clerk*  
(Area #1)



**Robert "Bob" O'Donnell**  
*Member*  
(Area #2)

## Board of Education

### Let's Stay Connected

*By Jackie Johansen*  
*President, Board of Education Area 4*

Feelings of connection can be hard to come by in this fractured environment. I've heard it said that we should have used the term "physical distancing" instead of "social distancing." I agree. So, what can we do to fully appreciate this moment we are in?

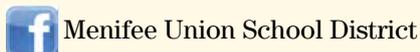
From home, you can increase your child's connectedness to his or her learning by getting your child outside. Our un-seasonally high temperatures have made it easier to venture outdoors this winter, and Menifee is full of trails to explore. One of my favorite apps is iNaturalist. Children can snap pictures of plants and animals they find. After the app identifies a species, you can share it with research groups. For evening hikes, we use star-gazing apps. To connect to the history of the area, we use the Menifee Historical Association's website and learn about early settlers.

As a teacher, I try to connect students to science and each other by taking field trips. For virtual field trips, I use the Web site CILC.org. Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration (CILC) offers free and low-cost trips for small, class-sized groups that are tailored for online learning. We've virtually visited the Buffalo Zoo and a national park and explored the Great Barrier Reef with a diver. Glacier Bay National Park hosts free trips, including whale watching, ranger talks, and glaciers. Homestead National Monument teaches sessions about women in history, the Homestead Act, and buffalo habitats. The North Carolina Zoo has free sessions on animal behaviors. These can be great opportunities to relax and connect with families.

Being present in the moment can bring a better sense of fulfillment. As you move forward, supporting your children, please know that you have supporters on the sidelines who are cheering you on. We are going to get back to the real normal soon, but for now, let's enjoy the moment.

### District Information:

**Menifee Union School District**  
**29775 Haun Rd., Menifee CA 92586**



**(951) 672-1851**

**[www.menifeeUSD.org](http://www.menifeeUSD.org)**



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Founder/Publisher



*Neta Madison*  
Netragrednik

# School News

Education + Communication = A Better Nation

[www.schoolnewsrollcall.com](http://www.schoolnewsrollcall.com)

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## Happy New Year!

We are pleased to begin this year publishing the excellence from the Menifee Union School District.

If you saw the movie Groundhog Day, you may feel like you are living it in reality during this pandemic with each day the same as the last. However, in this issue you will read how the teachers in each of the schools are engaging and motivating students despite the pandemic.

The good news begins with Superintendent Dr. Root's message on

page 2. As she said communication and relationships are important. Our mission statement is Education+ Communication = A Better Nation. Dr. Root reached out to include messages from the Mayor of Menifee, Chief of Police and Fire Chief. In each issue you will enjoy reading messages from district departments.

We hope you will look forward to including *School News Roll Call* among your reading choices. Our next issue is scheduled for August.

## City of Menifee

29844 Haun Rd., Menifee, CA 92586 • 951/672-6777 • [www.cityofmenifee.us](http://www.cityofmenifee.us)



**Bill Zimmerman**  
Mayor

### Mayor Attributes Menifee's Rapid Growth to its Excellent Schools

Menifee is one of California's fastest growing cities, with new neighborhoods and thousands of new residents arriving each year. "It's because we are a safe, affordable city with excellent schools," said Mayor Bill Zimmerman, a 30-year resident whose adult daughter was educated in the

Menifee school system. "It's what attracted my own family," he expressed with a sense of community pride.

Recognizing the impending growth, the City's Public Works team continues to cultivate a working partnership with Menifee Union School District facility planners to ensure that traffic circulation and infrastructure details are timed and coordinated with the developers of the many new communities.

In July 2020, the City of Menifee took a bold step forward in creating its own municipal police department. With public safety being the City's top priority, Menifee's city council members encouraged police Chief Pat Walsh's officers to maintain diligent traffic patrols around school



**Mayor Bill Zimmerman interacts with Menifee students**  
(Photo taken prior to COVID.)

campuses to ensure student safety. Mayor Zimmerman added that Menifee City Council "had student safety in mind" when they recently approved funding for two additional motorcycle patrol officers.

"Menifee's excellent schools help make this city attractive and successful," said Mayor Zimmerman.

# Menifee Police Department

29714 Haun Rd., Menifee, CA 92586 • 951/723-1500 • <https://menifeepolice.org>



**Pat Walsh**  
Chief

## Committed to Safety

Since the Menifee Police Department began serving the Menifee community on July 1, 2020, it has been our mission to make our community feel unified, engaged, and safe.

We have a diverse group of individuals serving our community. This is important when we interact with Menifee youth. We want the youth with whom we interact to see themselves in our officers. Of our total Menifee PD staff, 30% are female and we have a diverse racial and ethnic makeup as well. What is most important, though, is these individuals were chosen as the best of the best. More than 2,300 people applied to be a part of this team and those selected work hard every day to make sure our community feels safe and feels heard. We want our students to feel the same.

While the pandemic has altered the way we would typically like to interact with local youth, we are doing our best to ensure they know that we are here, we are approachable, and we care about them and their wellbeing. One way we can support the health and safety of Menifee youth is by promoting online safety for children. With computer and internet use increasing substantially this past year due to online learning, we encourage parents to look into online dangers and the associated warning signs. If you suspect something is amiss, go with your instinct and contact your Menifee Police Department.

Our Menifee PD values state that we are together, humble, and creative—values likely similar to those serving Menifee school children. The Menifee Police Department looks forward to having a strong relationship with our schools. If MUSD staff or partners have ideas on how we can become more engaged with our students, please reach out to me directly. It's my honor to serve.

# Riverside County Fire Department

210 West San Jacinto Ave., Perris, CA 92570 • 951/940-6985 • [www.rvcfire.org](http://www.rvcfire.org)



**Kirk Barnett**  
Fire Chief  
City of Menifee

## Committed to Fire Safety

My name is Kirk Barnett and I proudly serve as Fire Chief for the City of Menifee and surrounding communities. We are proud of our fire department and are always eager to serve the faculty and students within the City of Menifee Unified School District (MUSD). Fire safety education is a very useful tool in changing young people's behavior toward fire and the dangers that it presents.

It is our mission to ensure the safety of our young citizens in all activities; whether at school or at home. Teaching students how to use the 9-1-1 system and the

dangers of fire are two key lessons that our grant-funded "Danger Rangers" have been working with the Menifee Unified School District K-2 administrators, faculty and students in a distance-learning based video that reinforces fire safety inside and outside of the home.

To date, our education program has been delivered to 2000 Pre-K-2nd grade MUSD students and over 27,000 Pre-K-2nd grade students county-wide. For more information on our "Fire Safety ON, Accidents GONE" distance-learning education program for pre-K – 2nd grade students, please call our Public Information and Community Education Bureau at 951-940-6985.

We are anxious to re-engage with our community once it is safe to do so. We are committed to the safety of our community and our first responders.



# Counseling

29775 Haun Rd., Menifee, CA 92586 • 951/672-1851 • www.menifeeusd.org



**Melissa Lafayette**  
Lead School  
Counselor

## Meeting Student Needs

The Menifee Union School District school counseling team is committed to providing a comprehensive school counseling program that supports academic, social/emotional, and college and career readiness for all students with the collaborative effort of educational stakeholders.

School counselors utilize a multi-tiered

approach to meet the needs of all students. All students receive virtual classroom lessons from the Second Step curriculum which focuses on social-emotional learning and bullying prevention. School counselors utilize data such as attendance, behavior, and academics to proactively determine intentional interventions.

We are fortunate to have a full-time school counselor

at every elementary school, two at our middle schools, and two at our STEAM Academy. Since the beginning of the school year, school counselors have provided 1,469 lessons, 213 small groups, 1,680 individual sessions, 1,774 teacher collaborations, and 3,172 parent/guardian contacts. We encourage you to visit our website at <https://bit.ly/MUSDSchoolCounseling>.



## Educational Services

29775 Haun Rd., Menifee, CA 92586 • 951/672-1851 • www.menifeeusd.org



**Dr. Kimberly Ann Huesing**  
Assistant  
Superintendent

## Social Studies Curriculum Adoption

From the many projects that the Educational Services Department completes during the year, one exciting opportunity came to fruition this year with the adoption of a new history/social science curriculum for our middle school students. When the California Department of Education creates a new framework, updates standards, and then accepts entries by publishing companies, a district has the opportunity to review, pilot, select, and implement a new program.

The process for MUSD was intricately involved with planning and participation of history/social science teacher leaders from each of the middle schools in the district and included an in-depth process of piloting three different curriculum offerings. The final selection of National Geographic, Cengage was the culmination of 11 committee meetings, three districtwide professional development sessions and seven surveys among staff and students. The National Geographic program was selected for sixth-grade world history, seventh-grade world history and eighth-grade U.S. history. The teachers involved in the



adoption committee noted that the new curriculum was selected because of many factors, including but not limited to beautiful layouts and pictures, digital and hard-copy access, active engagement options, clear learning objectives for students, and high levels of academic vocabulary.

The curriculum selection was approved by the MUSD Board of Trustees in December, which cleared the path for additional professional development on the program, ordering, distribution and full implementation in the 2021–22 school year.

# Family Engagement Center

29775 Haun Rd., Menifee, CA 92586 • 951/672-1851 • www.menifeeusd.org



**Claudia Burt**  
Community  
Liaison

## Working Together – Achieving Goals

The mission of the Family Engagement Center is to work together with the community towards achieving goals that will benefit student growth and academic success. We are focused on the following actions:

- To work together with staff members to identify and address concerns in our communities
- To keep the community informed by a variety of network systems and to share information by different means
- To support gatherings and meetings among parents within our communities in order to encourage more effective advocacy for their students
- To help build more confidence among the members of our communities so that they will feel more comfortable visiting our schools, communicating with staff members, participating in school activities, and becoming more empowered.



**The Family Engagement Center continues to offer Community Classes virtually.**

The Center offers a variety of classes throughout the year so that the community can receive support, and the knowledge they seek to support student growth and success.

## Nutrition Services

29775 Haun Rd., Menifee, CA 92586 • 951/672-1851 • www.menifeeusd.org



**Adriana Lopez,**  
MS, RD, SNS  
Director

## Feeding Our Students

Since the start of school dismissal in March 2020, our dedicated Nutrition Services team at Menifee Union School District (MUSD) has served over 400,000 meals to children in the community. We appreciate the amazing work this team has done to ensure that children have access to healthy and

delicious meals during these unprecedented times.

As we continue school in the Distance Learning+ model, the Nutrition Services Department will continue to serve meals to children 18 years and younger, free of charge, at all 14 school sites within MUSD. Families may visit one site per day to pick up meals for each of their children. Meal distribution

takes place Monday through Friday from 11 a.m. to noon at each of the elementary schools, including Harvest Hill Academy, and from noon to 1 p.m. at each of the middle schools.

We encourage you to [visit us here](#) for more information. We hope to see you soon!



**Nutrition Services staff is ready to serve meals via curbside pick-up at all MUSD school sites.**

# Personnel / Risk Management

29775 Haun Rd., Menifee, CA 92586 • 951/672-1851 • www.menifeeusd.org



**Kara McGee, CSRM**  
Director  
Risk Management

## Role of Risk Management

The role of Risk Management at Menifee Union School District is to protect the human, financial, physical and reputational assets of the District. We work against the adverse effects of accidental loss through:

- Identification and mitigation of loss exposures by performing risk assessments and analysis with departments
- Evaluation and selection of appropriate risk management techniques
- Management of claims involving losses related to: bodily injury, property damage, automobile.

- Administration and management of liability, property, and other programs through insurance programs

The primary functions of Risk Management here at Menifee Union School District are:

- Contract Evaluation for Risk
- Liability/District property protection
- Oversight of Health Benefits
- Insurance
- Student Accident Insurance
- Occupational Health & Safety
- Ergonomics

## Pupil Services

29775 Haun Rd., Menifee, CA 92586 • 951/672-1851 • www.menifeeusd.org



**Caroline Luke**  
Director

## Filling Our Students' Needs

The Pupil Services Department is there to help all students and has the ability to provide extra support to foster and homeless youth. One community partnership yielded extra support for

those students when the Assistance League of Riverside in partnership with Riverside County of Education provided MUSD with gift bags that contained a blanket, a toy, stickers, socks and crayons. The bags were donated for distribution to the K-3 foster youth.



Lead school counselor Melissa Lafayette and school community liaison Noemi Sepulveda hosted a drive-up gift-bag distribution day for the K-3 foster youth. The Menifee Union School District and our foster youth thank the Riverside County Office of Education and the Assistance League of Riverside for their generosity and continued support.

If you are in need of support for your children, we are here to listen and help connect you with available resources.

## Technology

29775 Haun Rd., Menifee, CA 92586 • 951/672-1851 • www.menifeeusd.org



**Dr. John Morgan**  
Director

## Connected to Learning

Menifee Unified School District has invested in technology to increase student access throughout the school closures.

Students engage with their schools through Chromebooks, which allow them to connect, learn, and show what they have learned in a virtual format.

The technology department has worked with school sites to



**MUSD Technology staff are able to repair Chromebooks quickly. This enables each school to have Chromebooks on hand to exchange/sign out to students whenever needed.**

distribute 5,400 netbooks to students in need of computers at home. Through the use of COVID funds, the District is working to replace some of these devices that are aging and extending the checkout program to families to support state and federal assessments.

Further, librarians and site technicians are working to distribute headsets to families with multiple students. We know that homes are not always the most ideal settings for learning with all the distractions that interfere with listening and learning. The microphones and headphones will allow students to more efficiently engage with their teachers and peers.

# Menifee *Preschool*

26350 La Piedra Rd., Menifee, CA 92584 • 951/672-6478 • www.menifeeusd.org/pre



**Patricia Sosa-Alaniz**  
*Administrator*

## All About Us!

Welcome to Menifee Preschool, where the success of all children is our focus! The mission of Menifee Preschool is to provide children and their families with comprehensive preschool services and early-learning foundations to achieve success in school and life.

Our early-education programs are developmentally based and follow the guidelines of the Early Education and Support Division of the California Department of Education as well as the licensing requirements of the Department of Social Services. Whether your children are enrolled in our state preschool or special-education preschool, I am confident that they will benefit from our rich integrative learning program.

Menifee Preschool dedicates itself to maintaining a learning environment that enriches each child's preschool years. Teaching staff and support staff are committed to



working together with families to create an exemplary early-learning community. Our partnership with families is part of what makes Menifee Preschool a special place to grow and learn.

## Callie Kirkpatrick *Elementary*

28800 Reviere Dr., Menifee, CA 92584 • 951/672-6420 • www.menifeeusd.org/cke



**Julie Makapugay**  
*Principal*

## Our Student Leaders

Callie Kirkpatrick Elementary School has a long history of community tradition beginning with the school opening in July 1992. We are located on the original land in the heart of Menifee acquired by the Kirkpatrick family under the Homestead

Act of 1862, now home to the Pioneers of the Future.

We are a California Gold Ribbon School with a vision of every student thriving academically and socially and a commitment to providing opportunities to engage student interests. To support this ideal, we have a Student Council with elected officers that plan activities for our student body, learn and develop

leadership skills, and create innovative programs with community-service opportunities. Callie Mentors and Not Mean, Just Green are two student-created service-oriented programs that have been implemented this school year. Side by side with our PTA, we support our families with engaging activities and events throughout the year.



Everyone's a Star at Callie: #Calliestrong

## Chester W. Morrison *Elementary*

30250 Bradley Rd., Menifee, CA 92584 • 951/679-7076 • www.menifeeusd.org/cwm



**Vanessa Westmoreland**  
Interim Principal

### Supporting Our School Culture

Chester Morrison Elementary School students have been engaging in distance learning. Our teachers have collaborated to adjust curriculum and lessons to meet the needs of students in a virtual setting.

Students are participating synchronously and asynchronously each day. In addition to meeting our students' academic needs, our staff is diligently working to meet the social and emotional needs of all children. Ms. Fleming, the CWM school counselor, provides

weekly SEL lessons using the district-adopted Second Step Program, which has resulted in our students feeling emotionally supported and connected. Ms. Fleming also hosts a Lunch Bunch that provides students with a chance to socialize and stay connected.

Beginning this semester, students are invited to participate in a Community Circle each Monday to interact and socialize with one another in a safe, virtual setting. In the month of January, Ms. Fleming also facilitated the Great Kindness Challenge for our students and staff members to complete kind acts. The Kindness Challenge supports the school culture and climate at CWM.



**Ms. Fleming, the school counselor, hosts Lunch Bunch daily. Students participate in art, dancing, virtual field trips, and much more.**

## Evans Ranch *Elementary*

30465 Evans Rd., Menifee, CA 92584 • 951/246-7690 • www.menifeeusd.org/ere



**Mike Reyes**  
Principal

### Committed to our Community

At Evans Ranch Elementary School (ERES), we are committed to providing a standards-driven curriculum in a safe and orderly environment that promotes excellence and values. We believe every student is an individual of great worth, and we will equip them with skills and strategies to become lifelong learners in an ever-changing world.

This mission statement has transitioned to online school (distance learning), where teachers, students, and parents have committed to upholding its principles. Our students

participate in rigorous activities that maintain school goals for engaging academic achievement, leading to increased performance in English language arts and mathematics. The focus on these curricular areas develops the skills needed to reach competence in subjects like history and science.

Our staff meets weekly to discuss and analyze data to implement our school plan for student achievement: Prevention, Intervention, and Extension (PIE). Recently, we met to discuss mid-year assessments to monitor academic progress. Progress monitoring is essential to our mission and exemplifies our commitment to our students and community to promote excellence in education.

## Freedom Crest *Elementary*

29282 Menifee Rd., Menifee, CA 92584 • 951/679-5285 • www.menifeeusd.org/fce



**Eli Orr**  
*Principal*

### Mission and Vision

At Freedom Crest Elementary School, we are focused on our mission of “offering a safe, nurturing and positive environment where all stakeholders are respected, welcomed and supported equitably. As lifelong learners, students are inspired to be college and career ready.” Our vision at Freedom Crest is this: “We will create a school that sets no limits to the academic success and well-being of each student.”

In order to accomplish our mission and vision, we are working together with students, staff, parents and community members to continue to assist our students to display the core values of our school. These values are simple but profound, and when implemented by students and modeled by our staff will lead to success not only in school but in other aspects of life as well.

At Freedom Crest, we always aspire to S.O.A.R.—we are Safe, Organized, Accountable and Respectful!



**Freddie the Falcon, our Freedom Crest Elementary School mascot, is posing by our new sign purchased by the wonderful FCE PTO. The sign reminds students, staff, and community members to represent Freedom Crest by being Safe, Organized, Accountable, and Respectful (S.O.A.R.).**

## Herk Bouris *Elementary*

34257 Kalanchoe Rd., Lake Elsinore, CA 92532 • 951/244-7657 • www.menifeeusd.org/hbe



**Stephanie Acosta**  
*Principal*

### Reading and Knowledge

Herk Bouris Elementary has always proudly taken part in many activities that promote literacy, including annual Book Bingos and Reading Around the Campfire events. This year our goal is to expand on these traditions to really grow and unite our community around reading.

Our PTO recently raised a significant amount of money in order to purchase reading programs for the students, and our students and teachers alike have donated hundreds of books to ensure that we all have enough to sustain our hunger for reading and knowledge. Students also have the opportunity this year to participate in book clubs and offer book reviews to one another virtually.

Reading not only provides a gateway to knowledge and an understanding of content standards, it also allows students to practice empathy and understanding: first to characters, then to themselves, and then to each other.

The best is yet to come. We are just getting started in deepening our culture of strong, caring readers!



**Third grade student Jacqueline Contreras is surrounded by all of the many books she recently received. Her teacher, Ms. Hebert, works tirelessly to get books in the hands of each and every student.**

## Oak Meadows *Elementary*

28600 Poinsettia St., Murrieta, CA 92563 • 951/246-4210 • [www.menifeeusd.org/ome](http://www.menifeeusd.org/ome)



**Jennifer Baker**  
*Principal*

### Creating Tomorrow's Leaders Today

At Oak Meadows Elementary, we are “Creating Tomorrow’s Leaders Today!” Our mission is to foster and support a rigorous, and equitable learning environment in which all children and adults feel included in a compassionate, curious, and thriving school community.

We will accomplish this by:

- Providing a safe, restorative, and culturally responsive school environment
- Believing all children can learn at high levels and become leaders of their own learning
- Demonstrating a personal commitment to the academic success and emotional well-being of all students in collaboration with parents and caregivers
- Monitoring and communicating each student’s progress through data chats focused on personalized goal setting and progress monitoring
- Implementing tiered interventions to advance students’ academic, behavioral, and social, and emotional growth through multi-tiered systems of support
- Supporting innovative thinking and facilitating student leadership
- Working together in collaborative teams to evaluate our impact, and refine our strategic plans

Dr. Stephen Covey’s “The Seven Habits Of Highly Effective People” provides the foundation for our leadership culture. Dr. Covey defines leadership as “communicating a person’s worth and potential so clearly that they are inspired to see it in themselves.”

OME’s students study and practice the Seven Habits of Happy Kids:

- Be proactive. You’re in charge.
- Begin with the end in mind. Have a plan.
- Put first things first. Work first, then play.
- Think win-win. Everyone can win.
- Seek first to understand, then to be understood. Listen before you talk.
- Synergize. Together is better.
- Sharpen the saw. Balance feels best.

As a professional learning community, OME teachers and staff strive to empower each and every child to become collaborative, creative, compassionate, and critical thinkers with a “growth mindset”, leading their own learning along a path of college and career readiness.

Please visit <https://www.menifeeusd.org/ome/>

Instagram: [hunter.hawk.ome](#)

Twitter: [OmeMusd](#)

Facebook: [Oak Meadows Elementary](#)

## Quail Valley *Elementary*

23757 Canyon Heights Dr., Menifee, CA 92587 • 951/244-1937 • [www.menifeeusd.org/qve](http://www.menifeeusd.org/qve)



**Lily Pena**  
*Principal*

### Math Masters

Quail Valley Elementary School (QVE), where students are “Leaders of the Pack,” is a gem of a community located in the Quail Valley area of Menifee. Our diverse school, with an approximate population of 550 students from all demographic backgrounds, is a special place to learn.

Our focus at QVE over the past two years has been on developing high-quality math instruction, where students are able to choose mathematical strategies and tools to make sense of problems. Our focus on Cognitively Guided Instruction begins with finding out what students know and then using activities such as counting collections, choral counting,

how many ways, and what could the question be to ask targeted questions and engage students in mathematical discourse.

Students are encouraged to communicate with their peers about how they solve problems. During accountable talk time, students construct viable arguments and respectfully critique the reasoning of others.

Fostering mathematical practices is woven throughout lessons, where students make sense of problems and persevere in solving them while attending to precision. The overall goal is for students to increase their number sense and problem-solving skills, thus deepening mathematical understanding.

There is so much learning at QVE, making it such a wonderful place to be!

## Ridgemoor *Elementary*

25455 Ridgemoor Rd., Menifee, CA 92586 • 951/672-6450 • www.menifeeusd.org/res



**Mike Walsh**  
*Principal*

### Exciting Events

At Ridgemoor Elementary School, we pride ourselves on providing an engaging and interactive education for our students. We focus first on making a connection with every student every day and supporting them in any way necessary. We are especially proud of making school a fun and welcoming place where our students get their social and emotional needs met while exploring

new and fun activities that foster students' confidence and encourage them to become lifelong learners. We offer several activities throughout the year that bring together both our students and our Ridgemoor families with a community atmosphere that makes students feel at home.

We believe that each child is an individual and has a life ahead that is unique to him or her and reflects his or her interests. For this reason, we offer several enrichment

programs throughout the year. Students have benefited from woodworking, drama, Zumba, and art, to name just a few of the programs we have offered. We are currently offering: Reading Adventures Club, Art Club, Book Club, directed drawing, Jump Rope Club, Origami Club, virtual field trips, and LEGO Club.

At Ridgemoor, we find that students participate more actively at school when it is a place that they get excited about attending each day. We make a concerted effort to connect with families by inviting them to the school for fun activities both during and after the school day. We have an active parent volunteer group that helps to plan engaging, seasonal activities that give students events to look forward to all year long.

As the principal of Ridgemoor Elementary School, I welcome you to the Ridgemoor community, and I look forward to meeting you at one of our many upcoming events.

## Southshore *Elementary*

30975 Southshore Dr., Menifee, CA 92584 • 951/672-0013 • www.menifeeusd.org/SSE



**Bridget Heeren**  
*Principal*

### FIN Keeps Us Afloat

Here at Southshore Elementary, we pride ourselves on supporting the needs of all of our Mariners. Our staff is committed to ensuring that all students have strong literacy skills by the end of fifth grade.

We have created a thorough intervention program that provides equity and access to all of our learners. Using our mascot, a shark

named FIN, as the inspiration, we offer F.I.N. (Foundations I Need) time to increase their foundational phonics skills to improve reading capacity. F.I.N.tensive time is for students who are struggling readers and have the opportunity to work intensively with our intervention facilitator to fill their academic gaps. F.I.N.richment is for students reading at grade level and beyond to participate in enrichment activities with our amazing school counselor, Ms. Luna! Their enrichment activities are showcased on our school website for all to enjoy!



**Fin, more than a mascot at Southshore!**

## Táawila *Elementary*

30344 Stage Coach Rd., Menifee, CA 92586 • 951/723-3001 • [www.menifeeusd.org/tes](http://www.menifeeusd.org/tes)



**Daphne Donoho**  
*Principal*

### Career Exploration

Táawila Elementary School hosted the first session of our Career Exploration Academy. This Academy allows our fourth- and fifth-grade students a chance to explore different STEAM career paths to find the one that interests them.

The students were able to attend this Academy over the winter break. The first session focused on art and engineering.

Mrs. Weden led students in learning about pneumatics so that they could build a pneumatic crane. Mr. Martin taught students about facial proportions and then walked them through creating a facial sketch.

In the pneumatic sessions, students built a pneumatic crane and were challenged to redesign the crane to make it move. During their last session, the students created a short, stop-motion video showing their cranes in action.

During the art sessions, students explored the facial proportions of the human face. They looked at different methods for sketching out the features of the face. Each student also chose to use the Loomis method to sketch out their face. During the second meeting, the students used clay and their sketches to create a 3D model of their face.



**Mr. Martin's Career Exploration Academy**

For the final meeting, the students were able to meet with a professional animator who discussed how she uses the different tools to create 3D models for her job.

We look forward to more Career Exploration Academies that will provide our students with a hands-on learning experience in a career field they might be interested in pursuing in the future. Paws Up!

## Harvest Hill *STEAM Academy*

31600 Pat Rd., Winchester, CA 92596 • 951/325-6000 • [www.menifeeusd.org/hhsa](http://www.menifeeusd.org/hhsa)



**Brian Martes**  
*Principal*

### To Uplift and Enrich

Harvest Hill STEAM Academy is a school of "firsts." It opened in August 2016 as the first TK-5 STEAM Academy in the Menifee Union School District. Harvest Hill STEAM Academy is also the first TK-8 school in the district whose vision continues to be the model of academic excellence in science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics, and the leader in our diverse community.

Harvest Hill students are innovators who believe in an environment that nurtures safety, respect, and responsibility. These three important and overarching beliefs are fostered through the core values of GEARS. These are Grit, Empathy, Accountability, Respect, and Service. The expectation for our students to both shine and thrive are found in these beliefs and core values, and the actions that they produce each day.

Our mission is to prepare and empower each student to critically think, communicate, create, and collaborate as leaders with a global vision. We carry out our mission by having a "College and Career Ready Focus" on campus. Each classroom adopts a university chosen by the teacher and students, and each classroom becomes "the graduating class" to mark the year in which the students would successfully graduate college. Students know their university, its motto, and its song.

Another way in which we carry out our mission is through our membership in "No Excuses University." No Excuses University, or NEU, is rooted in six exceptional practices. Each practice is meant to uplift and enrich our students in a culture of universal achievement, collaboration, standards alignment, assessment, data management, and intervention.

At the heart of Harvest Hill STEAM Academy are relationships and a mind for innovation: Relationships that are strong and build trust, and a mind that is open and exemplifies a growth mind set. Just because we did it one way before does not mean we have to do it that same way again.

## Bell Mountain *Middle School*

28525 La Piedra Rd., Menifee, CA 92584 • 951/301-8496 • www.menifeeusd.org/bmms



**Dr. Regina Zurbano**  
*Principal*

### Ensuring a Quality Education

Since our transition to remote learning last March, the Bell Mountain Middle School staff have worked tirelessly to create, foster, and promote a learning environment that is inclusive, safe, and rooted in our collective desire to have our students achieve success. We remain steadfast in our commitment to academic excellence, and the development of compassionate young people who are empathetic to those around them and have

heart. Our genuine care for students continues to propel us forward to where we are today!

Even with the extreme challenges that we face of having to teach and learn from afar, we have augmented our remote instruction with digital programs that promote inquiry and discovery. Through this, our students develop critical thinking and communication skills, expand their creativity and civic mindedness, and improve their ability to engage in meaningful collaboration with others.

They also demonstrate kindness and compassion for others and the world around them. We encourage our Bobcats to exemplify the four aspects of C.A.R.E. in all they do. These are called Character, Accountability, Respect, and Effort!

It is also our desire to help them stay connected with us. Our weekly Bobcat Booster Blasts bring BMMS directly to our staff and students at home.

We are privileged and honored to work with our students and families to build long-lasting, supportive, and enriching relationships. Know that we are putting forth a tremendous effort to ensure that this experience will translate into a quality education for every one of our students, an education that is the framework for the future of our American democracy in the 21st century and beyond.

Thank you for your grace, compassion, and flexibility as we continue to refine and enhance the virtual learning experience. We want to make it as rich and meaningful as our students rightfully deserve. Go, Bobcats!

## Hans Christensen *Middle School*

27625 Sherman Rd., Menifee, CA 92585 • 951/679-8356 • www.menifeeusd.org/HCMS



**Kristina Lyman**  
*Principal*

### Engaging Learning

Our Hans Christensen Middle School (HCMS) students are engaged daily in distance learning while still maintaining a connection to school. Teachers

are facilitating social-emotional learning activities weekly to help students connect to HCMS.

Under the direction of Ms. Chavez and Mrs. Vasquez, our Where Everyone Belongs (WEB) group has been focusing on connecting our sixth-grade students to a school they may have never seen in person. Each Wednesday, eighth-grade WEB leaders meet with sixth-grade students to build relationships and connect them to HCMS.



**ASB held a National Bullying Prevention competition where students used chalk to promote anti-bullying. Above is the fabulous artwork of Giselle Castillo!**

Our Associated Student Body (ASB) director, Mr. Thrapp, and ASB students are hard at work engaging students in spirit days and weekly Google Meet gatherings. All students have access to The Student Lounge, where they can interact with staff and students, share pictures, review school information, and join competitions.

We continue to be proud of our students and their families, who have made education a priority and, despite the challenges, have shown perseverance and determination.

# Menifee Valley *Middle School*

26255 Garbani Rd., Menifee, CA 92584 • 951/672-6400 • www.menifeeusd.org/MVMS



**Melinda Conde**  
*Principal*

## Maintaining Connections

Unfortunately, many students have struggled to stay connected to their school family during Distance Learning. The incredible MVMS staff responded to this need by providing students with opportunities to virtually connect with one another during and beyond the school day.

To maintain as much normalcy as possible, and promote connections, we start each week with recorded weekly announcements which outline current school events, school reminders, birthdays, and student and staff shout outs. To top it off, we have multiple MVMS student-initiated virtual clubs, such as Art Club,

Student Venture Club, Cinematography Club, Black Student Union, Fitness Club, Social Power Hour, Mindfulness Club, Anime Club, Creative Writing Club, Gardening Club, Book Club, and Gaming Club.

All MVMS clubs are during lunch or after school, and are well-attended, with hundreds of MVMS students attending at various times of the day. Students can attend any or all clubs by emailing the club adviser listed on an all-student accessible document outlined in the weekly morning announcements. Our families can also always call the front office for guidance if need be.

Our MVMS students and staff members work together to ensure that connections are made and maintained throughout our school's closure. We are so proud to be a part of this phenomenal team. Go, Eagles!

## Novelist –Word Search Contest

**Rules!** One word in the list is NOT in the word search.  
When you have completed the word search, one word will be left and that word you email to: [Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com](mailto:Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com) Please put Menifee in the subject line.

Entries must be received by **March 30, 2021**  
From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win a \$20 gift card to Barnes & Noble.

- |            |             |
|------------|-------------|
| COMPUTER   | PEN         |
| EDITOR     | BROWSER     |
| IPAD       | GOOGLE      |
| SPELLCHECK | INTERNET    |
| PRINTER    | BING        |
| PUBLISHER  | ASPIRIN     |
| NOTEPAD    | KEYBOARD    |
| READERS    | TELEPHONE   |
| PENCIL     | WIFI        |
| IDEAS      | IMAGINATION |

